DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 961 UD 025 878

AUTHOR Taylor, Billie W., II
TITLE Classroom Discipline: A System for Getting the Administration to See Discipline Problems Your Way.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-944250-00-9
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 70p.
AVAILABLE FROM Southern Hills Press, Box 209, Dayton, OH 45409 ($6.95).
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Techniques; *Discipline; Documentation; *Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; Parent Teacher Conferences; Self Control; *Student Behavior; Student Responsibility; *Teacher Behavior; *Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

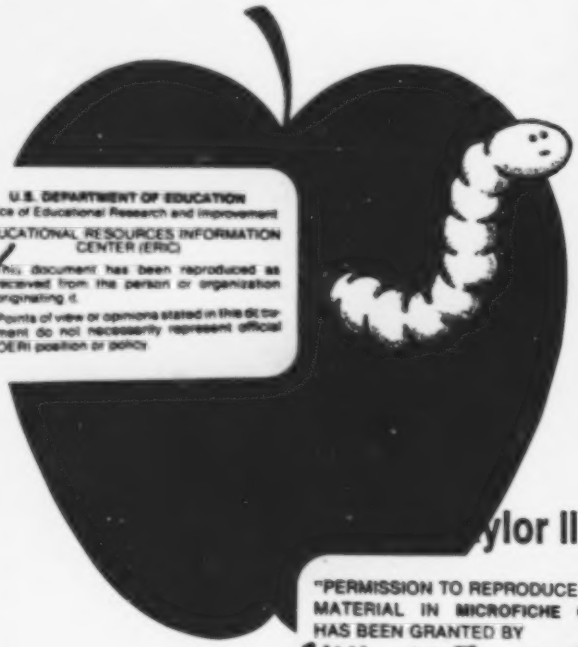
Classroom discipline is one of the biggest difficulties in teaching. This book describes a system of classroom management that combines the characteristics of a good teacher with those of a successful disciplinarian. The main message is that responsibility for good behavior belongs with the students and that teachers should spend more time teaching than on discipline. This approach is a practical one which has been tried and proven in many school districts, where the author taught and helped other teachers with classroom management. Each section of the book presents many strategies for coping in the classroom. The sections are the following: (1) rules; why they don't do the job; (2) routine: how to keep students busy and why; (3) control: what to do when the routine fails; (4) enforcement: what to say during confrontations; (5) documentation: what to write during confrontations; (6) distractions: what to do when... Five appendices list the details of good classroom actions, rules, and routines. (VM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED287961

CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ylor II

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Billie W. Taylor II
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

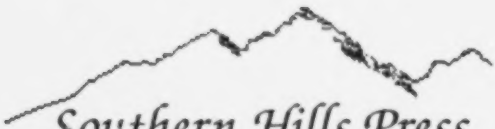
A System for Getting the Administration to See Discipline Problems Your Way.

UD025378

CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE:

A System for Getting the School Administrator to See Classroom Discipline Problems Your Way

by
Billie W. Taylor II



Southern Hills Press
Dayton, Ohio

Classroom Discipline © 1987 by Billie W. Taylor II. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means whatsoever without written permission except in the case of reprints in the context of reviews. For information, write Southern Hills Press, Box 209, Dayton, Ohio 45409.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Taylor, II, Billie W., 1940-
Classroom discipline.

1. Classroom management. 2.School discipline–United States. I. Title. II. Title: Class room discipline.
LB3013.T37 1987 371.1'024 87-23444

ISBN 0-944250-00-9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

PREFACE v

RULES: Why They Don't Do the Job 1

ROUTINE: How to Keep Them Busy and Why 7

CONTROL: What to Do When the Routine Fails 15

ENFORCEMENT: What to Say During Confrontations 25

DOCUMENTATION: What to Write During Confrontations 33

DISTRACTIONS: What Do You Do When 47

A Last Word 51

Appendix A: Our Classroom Rights 53

Appendix B: Action List for Dealing with the Administration 55

Appendix C: Classroom Routine 59

Appendix D: Discipline Reminders 60

Appendix E: Punishment Paragraph 62

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great many students, who shall remain nameless, contributed significantly to this book. They should certainly be acknowledged for their unsolicited assistance. Other than these students, the following teachers and administrators gave generously of their time in developing this document: Gerhard Coler, Lynn Halliwell, Richard Penry, Jane Schiff, Beth Taylor, and Victoria Williams. My thanks to them in particular and to the many other colleagues who have contributed to my education in managing a classroom well.

PREFACE

If you ask teachers to list their three biggest difficulties or concerns in teaching, discipline will be on every list. If you ask graduates from colleges of education what they missed most in their education, practical classroom management techniques will be named by nearly every one. If you ask school administrators what they have the greatest difficulty communicating to their teachers, they will mention classroom discipline every time. If you ask professors of education to name one area of education richest in myth and poorest in pragmatism, classroom discipline will be named often.

When interrogated further about the subject, all of these intelligent, knowledgeable professionals will say something like: "It's an individual matter." "It's impossible to teach someone how to handle children." "What works for one teacher won't work for another." All of these statements are true as far as they go, but none of them recognize that there is a **system** that allows for all of that and still gives teachers a structure that enables them to spend class time teaching instead of disciplining.

I have been a teacher for fifteen years in urban high schools and junior high schools. I have often been challenged by children who had poor classroom discipline. Principals have praised my work and colleagues have sought my advice.

A few years ago, a friend entered the teaching profession and became enmeshed in difficulties managing her classroom. We engaged in several conversations and exchanged letters on the subject. Later, this material was edited into some handouts (copyrighted) for a workshop on class-

room discipline. Since then those who have participated in my work-shops and read my hand-outs have often asked if this material were available in print. Until now it was not.

It is not that I have any tremendously new or magical tricks to make children behave, but this book organizes many successful techniques into a system of classroom management. You will learn the weaknesses (if you haven't already learned them from experience) of some theories and clichés, both traditional and modern. You will see that many of the characteristics that make good teaching lead inexorably to poor disciplining. You will find out how to combine the characteristics of good teachers and good disciplinarians. This is not just a collection of tips and techniques or a method of dealing with each type of disruption as a separate problem. It is a system for handling all types of problems in such a way that they are solved or those responsible are removed from the class.

The letters on which this book is based have been rewritten to include answers to questions that have been asked in conversations and at work-shops. The book aims at helping the reader develop a Philosophy of Discipline as well as a practical approach to classroom discipline. This approach cannot fail if consistently used. It has been tried by many teachers in many school districts and no one who understood it and did it has found it wanting. Although the letters were directed at the first year teacher, those of you with experience may benefit from them more because you've "been there." You know full well, "It ain't as easy as it looks."

Too much of the advice on classroom discipline focuses on how to change or correct one's teaching methods or personality. This little volume will show you how to place responsibility for behavior where it belongs—on the students.

How often have you said, "If I could just get rid of so-and-so, that would be a great class." Well, here's how to get so-and-so to be good—or gone. Good hunting!

RULES:

Why They Don't Do the Job

All of us know exactly how you feel, facing the beginning of the new year as a **teacher**, not as a student who always has the option of tuning out. How wonderful it will be, watching the children learn and blossom under your tender guidance. Ah! The expectations of the first year teacher! In fact, those of us who survive in the profession find ourselves with many of the same feelings many years later. It is important that you realize these feelings are what make teachers teach, but they are not the feelings of the second and third year teachers in entirely too many cases. The difference will become apparent to you by November, if not before.

Student teaching and college courses do not prepare you for the roles of arbitrator, traffic cop, and clerk that you will be expected to fulfill. Student teaching is good because it lets you practice communicating the subject matter

you have spent four years learning so well. However, it takes place in someone else's classroom. The atmosphere, tone, and control elements were inherited by you. The teacher you were studying under transferred authority to you. Probably you were filled with maxims about how to develop control. Unfortunately, this is so much a matter of style and personality that what worked for that individual may not be very effective for you. Worse, what a good teacher does and what one thinks one does are often very different things.

Many teachers support the theory of letting the kids know the rules right off the bat on opening day. They go to great lengths spelling out what behaviors are not acceptable and prescribing a long list of what punishments will be given for which infractions. Then there are those who spell out an equally long list of what behaviors are acceptable, establishing a set of rewards that will be given to those who conform. Either way, the kids are so *good* on opening day and maybe for the first week or two that you will probably not get around to implementing the lists until the situation is hopelessly lost. Nearly all first, second, and even some third, year teachers fall into this trap.

see Appendix A

"Our Classroom Rights" is a particularly delightful approach of this kind. A fifth grade teacher had it posted boldly in her rather rowdy class. It won't solve

the problems, although it likely could if properly followed up using the system discussed here. Its greatest weakness, though, is that it assumes that everyone in the classroom feels equally obligated to respect the rights of everyone else. Unfortunately, that simply isn't so. Too many children view the whole discipline thing as a game. If the teacher seems willing to play, they will exert every effort to win. It is also handy for the situation where the administration requires a posted set of rules and hand-outs listing rules.

The kids know the rules! Therefore, any list or ditto that tells them what the rules are can be immediately interpreted as a sign that you do not really expect them to know how to act! That gives you one strike against you immediately, and you don't even know their names yet!

The second strike is not far behind as they start looking for the loop-holes in the rules. Within five minutes one will do something undesirable that is apparently not included on the list. If you don't reprimand, others will join in. You haven't lived until you've spent half an hour with thirty little demons vigorously clearing their throats. Of course, if you do correct the initiator of this terrorism of the teacher, a virtuous claim (also loud and long) will pour forth that this particular behavior is not against the rules. You must now begin the tedious process of amending the list.

You have lost credibility on three counts. First, your list was incomplete. Obviously, you need a more comprehensive list and your students will be more than happy to provide assistance by looking for other disruptive behaviors that you omitted. Second, you have lost valuable class time arguing with a student. The disrupters have a round to their credit because you have spent time on an issue not related to the lesson. Third, and most disastrous, you have shown yourself willing to play the discipline game. It will, of course, continue.

Making general rules like, "No throwing anything" or "No interrupting" can be subject to interpretation. An accomplished student can spend several minutes disputing what constructions they can be given. The end result is the same. And, face it, you are probably not going to correct someone for tossing a pencil to another student two rows away. Or do you want such rules as, "No throwing anything in such a way as to create resentment or disruption?"

So what can you do? The answer is so painfully obvious that it takes several years to figure it out—and many teachers don't ever quite get it. Do nothing related to discipline until a particular situation arises that requires correction. Then correct it, quickly and quietly. Do not let anything out of line happen a second time.

RULES

You will find that they are so good while getting to know how far they can go that there will probably be no difficulty unless you let someone get away with something. If you do, watch out! All that needs to be said on the first day of school is something along the line of, "You are in my class, and you will act like ladies and gentlemen at all times." If someone asks, "What will you do if we don't?" explain your Action List.

see Appendix B

ROUTINE:

How to Keep Them Busy and Why

It is indeed a delight to have a schedule that makes sense and classes that cooperate for the most part. It is, of course, those that don't cooperate that need the most attention at first. It's also good to have established a meaningful classroom routine that gives you time to handle paperwork like attendance recording. Frequently, the students have very little to do at some points in your routine even though you are very busy. You may find this leading to trouble shortly.

Perhaps you should consider a few minor but significant changes. Put the door on the latch so that, as soon as it is closed when the tardy bell rings, it is locked. This makes it impossible for someone to slip in unobtrusively. In some schools it also prevents unwelcome visits from the outsiders and class-cutters wandering the halls. When someone knocks, answer the door with a punishment in mind. Either you get a late pass or the

student gets an hour of detention to think about being on time or has to write "I will be on time to class" a hundred times, copy a punishment paragraph one or more times, or whatever suits your style. What the punishment is doesn't really matter—the fact of the punishment does. Don't let the tardy student return for a pass or go to beg one from an administrator or counsellor or another teacher. Issue the punishment and offer to withdraw it if a proper pass is presented to you after school or the following day. These policies need to be announced only once, if at all. It also helps, especially if you have a problem with tardies, to stand by the open door during class changes to be ready to close it when the tardy bell rings. Your building administrator will appreciate this because your presence reduces the likelihood of excessive horse-play and lingering in the hall near your door. It's a great way to chat informally with students, too. Just be careful that everyone keeps moving and the doorway isn't blocked. The first few days you do this you may be amazed at those students who will stand just by your door and try to charge in as the bell rings. It is helpful to explain to them that tardy means "not in the room, in your seat, ready to work when the tardy bell rings." Then be absolutely firm and issue punishment wholesale once or twice and the problem should be solved. All you need to say on

see Appendix E

see Appendix C.1

the first day of school is, "We will be on time for the start of class." Everything else here comes after that statement—no more, no less. They will find out soon enough what "on time" means to you.

Your next statement should be, "We will have a few minutes of silent reading in anything you would like to read at the start of each period." (If someone asks leeringly, "Anything?" say something like, "If your mother will let you read it, I will. If there's a question, I will ask you to bring a note from her.") You can't depend on students to bring this reading material, but it is your all-purpose assignment for those who have "nothing to do" but talk and engage in disruptive behavior. The only time a child gets an 'F' for not bringing reading material is if he or she bothers the class. And, yes, these F's should be averaged into the term grade. If you prefer not to use grades in this way, then you should have specific punishment assignments prepared and ready to give.

see Appendix C.2

The third item of routine should be, "We will use a loose-leaf notebook with all papers written in ink. It will be evaluated once or twice each marking period." This puts the students on notice that they are expected to work in your room, not play or talk. Insisting on ink puts them on notice that they will be expected to concentrate and turn in quality work. Give an 'F' for the day when a student shows up with

see Appendix C.3

no notebook, pen, textbook, or whatever other materials you require. If it is necessary to give a student more than three F's, a serious discipline problem is brewing; take immediate corrective action. Don't wait until the culprit becomes a headache. By that time, several other students will also decide you didn't really mean it and you will have several problems, not one. Remember, your grades are the natural consequence of a student's behavior, as is summer school.

see Appendix B

The fourth part of the routine should be something like a **Thought for Today** on the board. I teach English, so that is exactly what I use (Bartlett's *Quotations* is an excellent source). Home Economics teachers could use a Nutrition Tip for Today; history teachers might use a Date for Today; science, a Formula or Law for Today; foreign language and music, a Vocabulary Word for Today, *et cetera*. The idea is to give your pupils something to do while you take attendance, write hall passes (be sure they are necessary), and do whatever other clerical chores you must accomplish before beginning the lesson. This starts them off quietly and busily. The first introduction to this should be, "We will have a _____ for Today on the board each day which will be copied into your notebook and you will write a paragraph explaining what it means." Announce this on the first day of school and

see Appendix C.4

begin doing it on the second day, third at the latest. Collecting suitable topics can be made easier by challenging students to offer suggestions for a "Thought." Suggestions that are accepted can be used and rewarded by "extra credit" grades, recognition certificates, anything **not** related to the discipline process.

The purpose of this assignment is also to give your students badly needed practice in writing and thinking. You may find it necessary to read the Thought for Today to the class, especially if it is a slower group. It may even be desirable to explain its meaning before expecting them to write. This may take two minutes right after you shut the door when the tardy bell sounds. By the way, it is no more necessary for you to grade each day's paragraphs in detail than it is for a baseball coach to evaluate every practice swing a player takes at a ball. Practice is for self-improvement, other assignments are for grades. Checking everyone's notebook for completeness every few weeks is sufficient, especially if you grade for completeness.

When you announce the next item in the routine, no one will be surprised—and they will know you mean business. "We will take attendance at the start of each period. No questions will be asked, nor will any hall passes be issued until roll-taking is complete." This part of the routine is difficult to enforce, but persis-

see Appendix C.5

tence will pay off. At this point there is no one hanging around your desk to ask you something, you have a complete view of the class with everyone in a seat, everyone has something to do, quietly working, and the period is well begun. After you have finished your clerical tasks, answer questions from students at their seats, write hall permits for those who seem to have legitimate business, but do not begin nor conduct any private conversations. The time for that is before the tardy bell or after class. You do not want the pupils to conduct private conversations during class and you must set the example. As you can see, the principle of this routine is to maintain complete control from the moment students enter until they leave. You will spend the first few minutes of each period this way or you will spend those same minutes screaming "sit down and shut up" throughout the class. This way you accomplish your clerical duties and do not elevate your blood pressure. It's your choice.

Just to eliminate any last hopes some of the more adventurous disrupters may have for opportunities to have some fun, the next announcement on opening day should be, "We will have carefully planned lessons with a great deal to accomplish each day. Work assigned must be completed on time." Thus, the routine encompasses the entire period. If you fol-

see Appendix C.6

low through on your promise to have carefully planned lessons and do not accept late work except from students who were absent for good reason, few will have time to be disruptive or a disciplinary problem.

Finally, you might conclude with the following: "We will leave the room quietly at the end of the period, and not before dismissed by the teacher. The bell is a signal to me to dismiss the class, not a signal to run out of the room. We will wait for the person speaking to finish his or her thought before we depart." If you haven't had your toes trod yet, you will unless you insist on this. For the first few days, hold them for few seconds once or twice, just so they get the idea. After that, if the herd begins to move the instant the bell starts to ring, you need only block the doorway and order everyone back to their seats before dismissing . It pays to be near the door at the end of the period in case this maneuver is necessary. To avoid frequent confrontations over this, try to end the lessons a minute or two before the bell rings. After a few days, they realize what is happening and most of them will cooperate during the lesson, knowing their reward is coming. Say something like, "You may have the last couple of minutes to talk quietly to your neighbor. You may not leave your seats. You may leave when the bell rings." If the class can't handle this then be sure the lessons run past the bell

see Appendix C.7

for a few days. If you allow this free time to exceed five minutes, you will probably have a class that has difficulty maintaining decorum. Besides, as a good teacher, you will want to maximize time on task.

see Appendix C

It's a simple routine, easily understood and easily enforced; no rules, no threats, no punishments offered, very tough to argue with, and, best of all, gives you complete control of the class from start to finish.

Remember that your last class of the day will be the most difficult. Be sure to conserve your energy and gear up for it.

CONTROL:

What to Do When the Routine Fails

So you think there's a hole in the routine! Well, you're quite right that the routine will not work in all cases all of the time. In spite of what was said in the last chapter, there are those pupils who find time to misbehave and, if they can't find it in the routine, will make it. Worse, as soon as one little villain finds your Achilles heel, everyone else, or so it seems, is right there to join in the fun. Actually, there are only, at most, 20% chronic discipline problems. The other 80% are joining in because it *is* fun and you don't seem to mind enough to do anything about it.

The thing to do first is identify the 20% and make sure they are seated as far away from one another as possible. In fact, one of the very first steps in controlling students should be changing assigned seats. This should not be done in the heat of anger at the time of the offense. Rather, without saying anything about it at the

time, make a note to do that before the next class meeting. Be sure you do it! Too often, we cool off and decide to be forgiving and let someone have another chance. Don't yield to this temptation. Examine your seating chart carefully and don't be afraid to switch "good" pupils to achieve your goal of relocating trouble-makers. When the students arrive at class the next day, greet those who have been moved with their new seating assignments. Be sure you do this before the tardy bell, quietly and unemotionally, without any mention of "trouble," "behavior," or anything else. You are not obligated to have a reason for everything you do. You are not accountable to students. They know the reason as well as you do and the less said about it the better.

see Appendix B.2

If one should ask, your answer should be along the lines of, "I have decided things will work out better this way." This answer suffices for the trouble-maker and the good student as well as those whom you decide to relocate because they can't see the board, kick the desk of the kid in front, or are too big or tall for their assigned seat. Remember, the kids know why someone is being moved if it's for disciplinary reasons, and, if it's not disciplinary, they have no need to know. Some kids will do anything to find out what you're thinking, but a little mystery is good for you; it keeps them guessing and on the defensive.

By the way, you might be interested in how to assign seats initially. This was presented in a workshop on dealing with classroom seating in newly racially integrated schools. It works quite well in any situation because it removes any arbitrariness while establishing your authority to control behavior.

When the children enter the room on the first day of school, they receive a numbered 3 x 5 index card. The numbers are small and placed in the upper right hand corner. The numbers on the card will become their seat numbers. Hand out the cards in numerical order as the children arrive, and don't tell them what the numbers are for. If you tell them, there will be a lot of card swapping going on, which is the one thing you don't want at this point. Then, while noting the last number given out, calculate how many seats in each row need to be used. For example, if there are 26 students and 49 seats in seven rows of seven seats, you will need the first four seats in six rows plus the first two seats in the seventh. As soon as the tardy bell has rung, tell the students to sit according to the numbers on their cards; 1-4 in the first row, 5-8 in the second row, and so on. (Late enrollments will be added to the seventh row and then across the fifth rank, sixth rank, and seventh rank.) Tell the students where they will sit by announcing, "We are going to sit in assigned seats. The method

of assignment is completely fair and unbiased. We will sit in these assigned seats at all times until further notice. No one will move until everyone understands where he or she will be. Look at the number on the card you received when you entered...."

There's no need to get around to letting them sit where they want. By the time you've learned their names, you have also rearranged people to solve problems with discipline and vision, and you don't want to repeat that process. When they ask—and they always ask—to be allowed to sit where they want, the answer is, "I think we'll wait on that awhile" or "I like things just the way they are for now."

Then put on the board the information wanted on the card: student's name, home address and telephone number, home room number, this period, parent's last name (so often different from the child's these days) and daytime telephone number (for emergencies—if something bad happens to someone during your class, you don't want to have to wait for somebody else to try to find a number where Mom can be reached). If you have textbooks to hand out on the first day, it doesn't hurt to have them place the book number on the card also. Collect the cards and tell them the Classroom Routine. That's the first day activities; the period is complete.

see Appendix C

The cards can be used to make out class lists, prepare the grade book (wait about three weeks to do this because of schedule changes, late enrollments, *et cetera*), create seating charts, and, most importantly, initiate a discipline file. Tomorrow everyone comes ready to work—except as mentioned earlier, and you're ready for that.

What to do? First of all, no matter how great your frustration and no matter how overwhelming the chaos, do not yield to the temptation to yell, scream, or bawl out the class as a group. Remember it all started with one little smarty-pants who got things going, probably three days before you were faced with this problem. Therefore, pick out the one worst offender and "tell him off." If you do this at the point in time where the worst offender is the only offender you will be much better off. If there are several simultaneously, pick out one at random. If the one you reprimand objects by claiming, "I wasn't the only one!" or "So-and-so did..." your response should be, "I didn't say you were the only one, but you are the one I spoke to. When *you* do as I say, I will pick on someone else." You must never ignore, sympathize with, or understand any objectionable behavior, no matter how minor.

see Appendix D. 2

The **first** time someone interrupts another student or yourself to ask for a pass to the restroom is the time to point

see Appendix B.2

out that you find such an interruption objectionable and that one should wait for a natural break in the lesson before asking **any** irrelevant question. A determined disrupter will not stop there but will now try to engage you in an argument by such responses as, "Well, I've got to go!" or "I just asked to go to the restroom!" or "Well, I guess I'll just have to go right here on the floor!" or some equally outlandish remark. The most effective reply to such foolishness is to quietly say, "I just told you not to interrupt and here you've done it again immediately. Please be quiet and wait your turn." If that doesn't work simply answer, "No, you may not go to the restroom now and if you say any more now you will not get a pass to the restroom from this class." Children with a critical urge will not want to waste time arguing any more than you do—they will shut up and wait or go without the pass and take their chances on being punished later. By the way, if one ever does leave class without permission, refuse to re-admit to class without a note from an administrator. If someone fails to return to class after leaving (with or without a permit), write the incident up and turn the report in to an administrator at the earliest possible moment. Be sure you issue a hall pass as soon as it is properly requested. That is, after all, the contract you implied. Another by the way—when a student returns to class,

collect the hall pass and note the time returned; then save the pass. If some vandalism occurs you have evidence to protect or condemn your students. If a question arises about the student's habits or activities you can contribute certain input. If you use wooden passes or something like that, maintain a use log with name, time left, and time returned.

Everyone else in the room will watch your transaction with interest. If the disrupter gets away with interrupting then, in all fairness, why shouldn't everyone else? If you remind the disrupters of the rule and, when they conform to the rule, they get what they want, you will find nearly everyone cooperating with you. One last by the way for this section, if the student claims health problems such as kidney, bladder, or allergy, there will be a doctor's note on file in the office. No note, no special considerations.

The "I Gotta Go" ploy is an example but, remember, any question or comment that does not deal with the lesson is the first step in a series of **intended** disruptive behavior. That is why you can **never ignore, sympathize with, or understand any objectionable behavior, no matter how minor. If you do, if it is at all successful, it will only increase in both frequency and intensity**. You have heard it said, no doubt, "There are times when it pays not to see or hear some things."

see Appendix D.2

I agree, but only after the first four weeks have passed and only if things are going well. The students are testing you—be sure you pass.

A sure sign that the behavior or comment was intended to be disruptive is the remark that begins, "Well, I just..." or "I only..." As soon as you hear those fateful words, you must take action. The most appropriate thing to do is "reflect" the behavior. Point out that the disruption is not good for learning the lesson and that you will not tolerate disturbing those who want to work. Be sure you do not discuss the issue the student raises. Stay with the fact that the class is interrupted and the learning process disturbed. The issue the student wishes to talk about is not on the lesson plan and cannot be given any time just now.

Another signal is a denial of doing anything at all. It can be amusing when you say to a student who is surreptitiously doing something naughty, "Stop that please." and he or she cries out, "I wasn't doing anything!" and you respond,"That's the problem, you're supposed to be...." Equally entertaining is to have a student protest to your correction, "I didn't do it!" Your response is sure to made its point, "Then stop talking about it and get to work." Another popular student comeback is, "What did I do?" The inescapable reply, "We both know what you did, and I

hope it will not happen again. Please do not disturb the class further." Notice that, regardless of the student's attempt to avoid correction, you should reflect the result of the disruption or interruption on the progress of the work. Do not discuss the act, question, or comment itself.

These techniques will go a long way toward bringing a situation under control.

ENFORCEMENT:

What to Say During Confrontations

It isn't easy getting a class back in order. The remarkable thing is how much harder it is to get a class back than it is not to let it get away in the first place. Here are some additional suggestions that might help in maintaining the kind of classroom control you need.

I'm sure that, at one time or another, you have tried to generate some kind of discussion in a class only to look around and discover two heads on desks, a newspaper concealed in a notebook, a paper-backed novel inside a text-book, six aspiring mathematicians counting ceiling tiles, four movie magazines on laps, three hot-rod magazines wide open on desks, a couple each of science, English, or math books, homework assignments, and Heaven knows what else. Everything, it seems, except the assignment you intend to work on. This means, of course, that you have been allowing this kind of behavior for some time but have said nothing about

see Appendix D.3

it. Now it is definitely interfering with the progress of the class. Had you done something about it earlier, when the first daring soul's head was laid down to take a nap or the first time extra-curricular reading material was opened up, this situation would not have arisen.

Interestingly, many lesser students have found a perfect pattern for taking a painless 'F.' First, they are loud and disruptive, making sure you learn their names and begin to wish they would just go away. As soon as they are convinced you are thinking this—ideally before they get sent to the office, but they are willing to make a trip or two to be sure—down goes the head. The theory is, and too often it is right, that you will be grateful to have them quiet. You will say nothing about the goofing off so as to more easily control the rest of the class. If you handle disruptiveness correctly, several students are sure to get to this point fairly quickly. If one gets away with it for a few days, there will be others eager to follow the example. Their sole goal is to stay out of trouble until they can drop out. These are exceptionally difficult problems to solve. In fact, there is every reason to believe that you can be only marginally effective in teaching them. Failing marks are nothing new to them and their parents have long since given up expecting anything else. So long as Mom or Dad do not have to take time off

from work to visit the school, the child will not be in any trouble at home. If the passive learner erupts when you, in effect, challenge this learned helplessness, follow your building's procedure for handling violent situations.

The second group among these inattentive pupils is those who need another study hall or think they are smart enough to pay attention to a class discussion and do home-work for another class at the same time. Third, you have those who are simply disinterested in the subject and will do whatever comes to hand rather than participate in your class.

Whatever the cause, the result is exactly the same—a class in which meaningful discussion or lecture is impossible. The best solution is to avoid yelling about it or saying anything to the class as a whole. Instead, as soon as you notice the first head down or the first magazine open, tell that student that this behavior is not acceptable and to please look at you or at whomever is talking and at least try to follow the discussion. Another way to point this out is to suddenly call on that individual to recite. Do not, however, do this in a way obviously calculated to embarrass or, should the answer be correct, you could be the one embarrassed. Insist that the students have only the current assignment in front of them. Say as little as possible about this issue, simply keep the

pressure on all the time by being alert and reminding the culprit(s). If a particular individual is extremely persistent, schedule a private conference and treat as a serious discipline problem. These actions are, after all, a disruptive influence on the academic process.

see Appendix B

Once you have allowed the situation to develop to the point described above, a broadside salvo at the class may be necessary. Then return to the pattern of reflecting behavior and working only on individuals.

There are many things a teacher cannot permit students to do in the room. The first chapter advised you that it was not wise to imply to students that you did not believe they knew how to act. Unfortunately, many of them want you to think they don't—if they can get away with it. Therefore, even though you don't have a list for them of what you will not allow, you must have clearly in mind what is and isn't permissible. The list, for you only, is: no leaving assigned seats, no talking, no gum, no hats, no sunglasses, no coats, no body contact. The kids do not exactly know of this list, but when someone enters the room wearing or chewing a forbidden item, mention it—"Take off the hat, please." "Please take off the sunglasses." Keep a huge, ugly, dirty coffee mug in your desk. If you see someone chewing, get out the mug and walk casually that way and

see Appendix D.4

say, "How about a contribution?" Since there are already several pieces of gum and candy in the cup, what you mean is obvious. If someone asks, "You mean we're not allowed to chew gum in here?" say, "I didn't say that. I can't make you get rid of it if I don't know you have it. But if I see it or hear it, out it goes." Don't quarrel with those who opt to swallow it. If it later turns out that it wasn't swallowed really or completely, take the next step on the Action List for insubordination as well as the actual offense.

see Appendix B

Again, it is extremely important to say as little as possible about these rules. The students already know what behaviors are acceptable and which ones aren't—even first graders. All they need to know is that you will demand that they behave correctly. If you teach them this from the first day forward, you will have few difficulties.

Occasionally, you will have a student who thinks it is cute to keep on repeating or make some new wise-crack or antagonistic remark when corrected—even to the point of saying something like, "I won't do it." Your immediate response should be to demand in a challenging tone that the remark be repeated. It probably won't be, but if it is, demand to know why the refusal to follow your instructions. If this fails to correct the behavior, ask point blank, "Do I understand you correctly; you

are refusing to do what I have told you to do? The word for that is insubordination—do you know what that means?" If the student still refuses to follow directions (this seldom happens), write the entire conversation *verbatim* and send the culprit to the office at once. The rest of the class will usually sit stone silent while you write. If not, say that you have plenty more of these forms for referral. Should the child in question absolutely refuse even to leave the room at your behest, follow your principal's procedure for dealing with violent, uncontrollable students. The person may not be violent at the moment, but soon will be. Don't argue, get help.

see your teacher handbook

Once you start to write, do not stop! If the student balked sufficiently to force you to begin the referral process for administrative action, that person must go! If not, the message you have sent your class is, "You can do and say anything you want in my room until I start writing." Obviously, that will not do. Be sure you do this the **first time** anyone gives you any kind of back-talk or refuses to do your bidding. You will not have to do it more than once or twice before the class understands that you will not tolerate any foolishness. If the individual returns to your room before the end of the period, do not even look at whatever note may be offered—order an immediate return to the office for the remainder of the period. You

can straighten out expectations with the administration later, but this first time there must be no doubt in any student's mind about who controls attendance in your room.

Be sure you do not say anything to the rest of the class while all this is going on except, when it is evident that a problem is building, "Excuse me, we will have to interrupt class a moment." Any other student who tries to contribute to the problem or jump in on the culprit's side should be sharply reprimanded, "Your opinion was not asked for, nor is it needed. Be quiet." Do not say this sarcastically, just firmly. Return to the original problem immediately.

During these unpleasant interludes it is difficult to remember but must be remembered at all times: do not generalize about behavior. Stay with the specific offense and individual. Make no threats. Call no names. Do what needs to be done to correct behavior with a minimum of time and words. Stay calm.

see Appendix D.4

Some other points that do not require extensive discussion or analysis are:

see Appendix D.5-9

Come down hard on calling out, unrelated questions, not bringing books, paper, pen;

Do not tolerate rudeness in any form to yourself or any student—be severe;

see Appendix B

Reprimand any infractions immediately and follow your Action List—no second chances;

Keep your desk, closet, and files locked at all times;

Post Appendix D inside the front cover of your grade-book and refer to it often.

You see, these children really do know how to behave properly. All that is necessary is that you prove to them that you have the will and the determination to demand it. This requires you to be extremely attentive from the opening day forward.

see Appendix D.10

Most important, show them that you love them by not letting them get away with anything. Being loose and "kind" guarantees your being treated with disrespect and limits the educational opportunities of everyone in your class. The kids know that "nice" teachers are those who are strict, but love them. "Mean" teachers are those who enforce rules inconsistently or apply them only to certain people. If you don't love them enough to control them fairly, you don't belong in a classroom. I know you belong in a classroom. I know you love them. I know you won't let them get away with anything.

DOCUMENTATION:

What to Write during Confrontations

Yes, it is criminal the way some kids act—even one or two of these can spoil an otherwise delightful class. Since you have implemented all the suggestions made to this point and find yourself with a couple of hard-core problems, it's time to admit that there are always those few you can't do anything with. Either they don't like you or you don't like them or they're professional class disrupters or something. Some kids like to foil a teacher just to get sent to the office! It is, after all, a legal way to cut class. There are teachers, believe it or not, who encourage class cutting and don't report it just to avoid these little darlin's. Of course, these teachers soon lose control of the class anyway because students are sensitive to what others get away with and why.

The administrators of the school are apt to get very up-tight about that situation. Principals do not like to have people wandering the halls without any

purpose other than smoking in restrooms, pulling fire alarms, and disturbing classes. Thus, it often seems, the administration is perfectly willing to criticize your operation without supporting you in dealing with your problems. The trick is to get administrative support without having them angry at you. If you become one of those teachers who let kids cut, send kids wholesale to the office, or send kids daily to the office, you will soon be out of favor with pupils and administrators alike.

There are certain procedures that must be followed to permit administrators to act. If you do not give them the ammunition they need, there is little they can do besides talk to the malefactor. That is not exactly what we have in mind when we finally resort to the office.

Too often, we teachers wait to send someone down to the office until we have reached our breaking point with that individual. Worse, we don't appear to have a good enough case against that individual and the administrator's options are limited. We expect action, but all we get is conversation! When we don't get what we want, we blame the administration for lack of support. When administrators get children in the office without proper documentation, they blame the teacher for: a) being weak, b) being a poor teacher, c) picking on kids, d) all of the above. So, rule

one is **avoid sending children to the office**. Rule two, **avoid losing your cool.** In order to follow both of these rules and still maintain control and teach, you must have a system.

see Appendix B.1

In some states there are definite legal requirements about what must be done before a child may be suspended, removed, held out, expelled, or whatever. Nearly all administrators are thinking (or should be) "kick him out" when a disciplinary problem reaches them. They are busy and have every right to expect that the teacher has exhausted every remedy before laying the problem on someone else's desk. To gain administrative support, you must demonstrate to everyone's satisfaction that you have, indeed, done everything that you can to handle the problem before writing a referral.

Therefore, the first infraction of any rule or violation of good manners by a student should be corrected by a pointed comment to the individual immediately when the infraction is noticed. Do not ignore **anything. Give no second chances.** If you don't know what else to say, a simple, "Don't do that!" in a sharp tone accompanied by a glare should be enough. If you followed the first day of school routine suggested earlier, you can follow through properly by the time the first ten minutes are over on opening day. Take that student's 3 x 5 file card (remember?)

see Appendix B.2

and note the date, the offense, and "verbal reprimand" on the back of the card. Do this where the students can see what you are up to, but say nothing about it. The sharp kids will remember that somebody's daytime telephone number is on their card and they may well ask what you are doing. If they do, tell them, "Just making a note to myself."

see Appendix B.3

The second time that student violates **any** rule of conduct or good manners, **whether it's the same offense or not**, correct the student and (as you make your note on the card noticing that this is the second time you have had to speak to this one) say, "Would you please stay back a moment after the bell has rung?" If the student continues to be disruptive, interrupt the class to give a page to read or some other assignment and take the disrupter into the hall at once. Whether you go into the hall at once, wait until the end of the period, or wait until after the room has cleared after dismissal depends on how serious the offense is and the response to your request to stay back.

The purpose of this conference is to explain the type of behavior that you find unacceptable. It really yanks a pupil's chain to begin the conference by saying, "I am required by law to have a private conference with you to tell you what I find unacceptable about your classroom behavior." Then proceed to outline the rules of

the school, your expectations, and good manners with heavy emphasis on the infraction of the moment. Try to take less than a minute. If you take more than three minutes, you have a risk of the student missing the point—which is that you won't have the class disrupted by anyone for anything at any time. If the student tries to dodge responsibility for the behavior at issue—"I wasn't the only one..." "So-and-So made me do it..." or whatever other tired excuse is tried—your response should be the same. "I did not bring you out here to talk about that. We are talking about you and what you did." In conclusion demand affirmative answers to the questions, "Do you understand what I mean?" and "Do you understand that we have just held a private conference about your behavior as required by law?" Then, if you're still feeling frustrated, assign some punishment—detention, writing sentences, extra homework, whatever fits with your philosophy. Note the date, infraction, fact of the conference, and punishment awarded on the back of the card. Don't worry about it if smart-stuff skips detention or doesn't do whatever punishment was given; you'll get even on the next round for that, too. By the way, if something is said during the conference that suggests someone else contributed to the misbehavior, be sure to reassign some seats before the next class begins. And

see Appendix E

note on both students' cards the need to reassign seats. In this way you may uncover an instigator you hadn't noticed.

see Appendix B.4

The third time a charmer gets out of line in your class, correct verbally and **say no more**. If that does the trick for the rest of the period, great. If not, skip to the paragraph on the fourth offense. As soon as possible after class, call Mom or Dad. (Don't tell children you are going to call their parents. You may not be able to reach anyone and you provide time to prepare an alibi.) You should have on your card the telephone number where someone can be reached during the day. Home, parent's work-place, grandma, or neighbor, it doesn't matter. The child's behavior has become an emergency! In fact, work is best for your purposes. You can count on little darlin' being in hot water for openers if Teacher calls Mom or Dad at work. Try very hard to reach the parent before the children get home from school. (If there is no phone number that you can use on the card, check the office records, and if you still can't find a good number, note that you attempted to call on the student's card.)

Begin the conversation by saying, "Your child has a problem in this ... class." Do not say, "I have a problem with ...." The child has the problem, not you! Remember in your conversation with Mom or Dad not to de-emphasize the seriousness of the

problem. Some parents will make terrible threats against the child in order to get you to back off your dissatisfaction. However, their child has disrupted the learning process on three separate occasions and, maybe, has not accepted the punishment you prescribed. Give the parent all the details. Explain that the child has endangered his or her own academic progress. Continued behavior of this nature will cause great harm and damage the opportunities of others in the class. That, of course, cannot be allowed. Thank the parent for his or her cooperation, listen politely to whatever sob-story may well follow, repeat that you cannot excuse disruptive behavior for whatever reasons, thank again for cooperation, and hang up. You must not allow either a parent or student to dissuade you from insisting on proper behavior. Bear in mind that you are not making any unreasonable demands and that the learning process has already been disturbed three times. If the parent says something like, "Well, we'll have a talk and if you have any more trouble, you just call me again," you must point out that you are busy and any further problem the child has will be dealt with by somebody else. If the parent wishes to call you for a progress report, explain when you have planning time and invite a call any time in that block. Should the parent express indifference to the problem the child is

having, accept the information and repeat your warning. You are, after all, following a procedure and this call is part of that procedure. It really doesn't matter whether the parent takes action or not. All you are actually accomplishing here is avoidance of a complaint from a parent that, "I didn't know."

If the parent has any influence at all, this will be the last time you need to concern yourself with that child's behavior.

If not, the next time this child disturbs your class, it is time to get some other help. Write up the first three incidents with dates, action taken, and add this fourth disruption. (Again, it may be the same as one of the other three or for something entirely different.) Refer the student to a school counsellor with a request that the counsellor talk with the student before your next class meeting. It may be that there is a personality problem, vision difficulty, or student conflict problem that is interfering with this student's ability to adjust to your class—one that the student was unwilling to share with you. A counsellor should be able to identify any such problem that may exist. Realistically, this will not be the case most times, but you should leave no stone unturned to help this child be successful in your class without causing any inconvenience to yourself or others. Ask

see Appendix B.5

the counsellor to find out what is troubling the child after specifying what behaviors you have observed that seem to be creating difficulties. Take this right off your file card on this student. Add the counsellor's response to the card, including any actions you take as a result of the counsellor's findings. If it seems appropriate, ask the school nurse to become involved. If the counsellor doesn't do anything about your referral, it is not your problem! You have met your responsibility by making the referral. The functioning of the guidance department is the principal's bailiwick and you don't have to do any more than follow your system for him to find out if there is a problem in that area.

The fifth time this child makes an infraction of **any** rule or violates good manners in **any** way, you have grounds for referring the student to the administration. Write the referral, being sure that it includes everything on that file card—dates, detailed list of infractions, precise quotations (no matter how offensive), actions you took, and responses of parent and counsellor, if any. Do not send your file card, send a copy or re-write the information on the referral. It would be a shame to spend days, weeks, or even months building a file on a student proving recalcitrance, only to have it misplaced. Your administrator now has a fully documented case history and can consider options.

see Appendix B.6

At this point, you have no vote on the disposition of the student. You have referred the student to the administration and their professional judgement must prevail. If you don't approve of the principal's methods, avoid referring discipline cases to that office. If you want a student expelled or suspended and the principal doesn't like to put children out, you will need to develop a more impressive file before you can expect that action. The important thing is that the students know they cannot escape behaving as they should in your class. Whatever the principal does, it is not your business. It is between them. You should cooperate fully, knowing that sooner or later the student will be forced to conform or will be removed from the school. You can also be reasonably sure that you are not the only teacher having problems dealing with this child. (If you are, the administration will not be bashful about telling you so.) The administration's job is to help teachers teach and students learn. Let them do their job their way; and follow their suggestions.

Note! It is possible to have an extremely ill-mannered, ill-trained, undisciplined brat who takes the better part of your day, once, going through all the above steps in one period. I recall one year when a boy came into my room determined to establish dominance. I knew his name

and had corrected him twice before the class was seated. While the class was finding assigned seats, we had our private conference in the hall. Before I could go over the Routine with the class, this fellow was on his way to the counsellor (I asked the counsellor to call his parents as I did not have time at the moment.) He was back in the room about fifteen minutes before the end of the period, and within five minutes was on his way to an assistant principal with a fully documented file. Most important, though was that the other members of the class behaved reasonably well. They knew that I was in control, knew exactly what I was doing, and would eventually win. They didn't doubt the final outcome and did not want to follow that route.

Normally it takes several days, maybe weeks, before disciplinary problems get to the office. But you must follow the pattern in the order given, no matter how inconvenient at the time. It is especially tempting to ignore a minor disruption in an otherwise orderly classroom rather than to interrupt class to engage in correcting behavior. It becomes even more tempting when the kid sees you noticing and says, "Sorry," or something else to pacify you. So when you hear that, "My fault!" you must reply with something like, "Don't be sorry, just don't let it happen again." Make a note on that student's

card and follow through. If you let it slide that first time, you can count on that behavior becoming louder, more frequent, and more general as days go by.

It's relatively easy to correct one or two bad actors; it is impossible to control ten. If you deviate from this pattern or, worse, do nothing about certain types of unacceptable behavior when the first daring soul ventures a minor disruptive move, you will soon have control problems. The other children are carefully observing how you deal with disruptions and are deciding how they will act in your room. They are debating whether they want to take you on or not. Even if you have ten pages of rules, they cannot protect you from your own lack of observation and action.

Above all else, be consistent and fair. If one student can't do a certain thing, nobody can. On the other hand, throwing a pencil hard enough to do injury and excite retaliation is a very different thing from sharing one with a friend two rows over. Anyone with common sense can see the difference and should not be afraid to allow for it.

One last note on the administration. After you have sent a student to the office be sure you get a report on what transpired from both the administrator and the student. Add it to your file card on that student. If there is a discrepancy in what you are told, highlight it and discuss

with the administrator. On each subsequent offense by that student, write a complete referral and send it to the office. In the very rare case of incompetent or uncooperative administrators, it may be necessary to recognize that your only help will come from the superintendent of schools or board of education. Prepare a complete case history and send it to the main office. This step is not recommended for non-tenured, non-union teachers, however.

An important footnote to the discussion of documentation: if a minor offense escalates to a major offense, escalate your response, not your voice. For example, a tardy student who refuses to accept reprimand or punishment is not to be treated only as tardy—the additional offense is insubordination. The student who uses foul language in response to your reprimand is now guilty of rudeness and vulgarity. If the rude and vulgar and tardy student rises from his seat or moves toward you, the offense is now called "menacing." You have grounds in one such exchange to take the next several steps on your Action Plan at once.

see appendix B "Examples"

DISTRACTIONS:

What Do You Do When ...

Now you can handle any student, no matter how incorrigible he or she may be. There is one other type of threat to classroom control that should be discussed. These threats come in the form of unanticipated and unplanned interruptions to your class. Some examples: the principal walks in, it begins to snow heavily outside, a roach crawls across the floor, a bee enters an open window, the public address system squawks uncontrollably, a mouse scurries along a baseboard, the list is endless. If you allow your excitable students to get carried away with the situation, even an otherwise model class can disintegrate.

Certain threads carry through dealing with most of these situations if you are to minimize their impact on the progress of the lesson. First, it will not be effective to try to ignore it—the situation is real and it will not go away. Therefore, as soon as you see some students noticing,

ascertain the cause of the distraction. Then calmly call everyone's attention to it. Let them exclaim and comment for a few seconds while you decide what to say. Make an appropriate remark and then proceed with the lesson. Treat anyone who won't settle back down in your normal way.

see Appendix B

The principal, of course, may want more than a simple, "Good morning." If so, deal with the interruption as quickly and quietly as possible. If not, resume the lesson immediately.

Poisonous insects, the first time one appears, require special handling. Some children are allergic and may have legitimate grounds for fear. Ask the class, "Is anyone here allergic to bee stings?" Those that answer in the affirmative should be asked very quietly what happens to them when they are stung. There are often those who confuse normal swelling with allergic reactions and you need to know true allergics. The truly allergic child will mention such things as nausea, dizziness, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, getting shots, being hospitalized, usually several of these. You, however, shouldn't mention any of these symptoms. There is no point in helping those who would mislead you if they could. If a child does describe a real allergic response, quietly say, "You may leave the room if you become afraid of being stung." (They

very seldom do and, if they do, they never abuse the privilege.)

Launch immediately into the natural history of the critter, explaining that it is only looking for something good to eat and will leave as soon as it finds nothing. This is a good opportunity to discourage bringing food to class or wearing oppressive aromas. Say, and enforce, "If you don't bother it, it won't bother you." If it buzzes you, **stand still. You must set the example!** You may also decide to reconsider your choice of bath soap or perfume or after-shave. Reprimand those students who flail at it in violation of your instructions by establishing eye contact and explaining the facts again. If a child is clearly capitalizing on the event to create havoc, handle the disturbance according to the discipline plan. Keep an insecticide handy to eliminate an exceptionally persistent beastie. (Don't forget to excuse those students who are allergic to insecticides before you spray.) Bees, wasps, and the like will leave as quickly as they came if not harassed or confused. Return at once to the lesson.

see Appendix B

If the distraction is loud and persistent, like a shorted p.a. or remodelling construction, switch to individual desk work for the duration and follow your discipline plan for those who don't cooperate. Other phenomena need to be dealt with factually, briefly, and calmly. Then do not

allow the distraction to interfere with resuming the lesson. Keep in mind that your objective is to appear to be unflappable and in control of yourself and your class at all times.

A Last Word

Teaching is such fun! If those few children who don't behave are dealt with quickly and calmly, the others can be such pleasures to work with. Most kids love to learn. Maybe they don't think they want to learn what you are offering, but if you set the right tone in the classroom they'll give it a try. The greatest thrill a person can have is to help a child with a bad attitude turn himself or herself around. Many times the worst attitudes are found in the brightest people. The most fun of all is when you can joke and play with your students in a learning environment. If you use what you have found here, you can become one of those who are known throughout the school and community as a "good teacher."

Appendix A: Our Classroom Rights

I have a right to be happy and to be treated with compassion in this room.

This means that no one will laugh at me or hurt my feelings.

I have a right to be myself in this room.

This means that no one will treat me unfairly because I am black or white, fat or thin, tall or short, boy or girl.

I have a right to be safe in this room.

This means that no one will hit me, kick me, push me, pinch me, or hurt me.

I have a right to hear and be heard in this room.

This means that no one will scream, yell, shout, make noises, or talk when I am talking.

I have a right to learn about myself in this room.

This means that I will be free to express my feelings and opinions without being interrupted or punished.

I have a right to a pleasant environment in this room.

This means that no one will leave papers, gum, or food in or on tables, chairs, or the floor—nor will anyone disturb my belongings.

I have a right to work in this room.

This means that no one will damage, destroy, or lose books or any other learning materials.

I have a right to my fair share of the teacher's time in this room.

This means that no one will interrupt my conferences with the teacher or delay the beginning or progress of my class.

Appendix B:
Action List for Dealing with the Administration

1. Avoid sending children to the office. More important, avoid losing your cool.

2. On the first infraction of any rule or violation of good manners, make a pointed comment to the individual—**no second chances**. If you notice it, mention it. Prepare a documentation card or sheet for that individual (best is to have the children do it on the first day of school with everyone giving you name, address, telephone number, parent's last name and work telephone). Briefly note the date, the infraction, and "reprimand" on the card.

3. On the second infraction of **any** rule or violation of good manners, conduct a private conference with the individual explaining the type of behavior you find unacceptable. Demand an affirmative answer to the question, "Do you understand what I mean?" If necessary take the individual into the hall immediately to conduct this conference. It takes only a minute or two. Assign punishment if you like. Note date, infraction, and "private conference" on the card. Add nature of punishment, if any.

4. On the third infraction of **any** rule or violation of good manners, call the parents (preferably before the children get home from school) and explain that the child is endangering his or her academic progress if behavior does not improve. Note date, infraction, and "called home" on the card. Very few will require further action.

5. On the fourth infraction of **any** rule or violation of good manners, refer the student to the guidance counsellor with a request that an attempt be made to find out what is troubling the student. List everything on your card on this referral. Add the date, infraction, and "referred to counsellor" to the card.

6. On the fifth infraction of **any** rule or violation of good manners, refer the student to the administration with a list of everything on your card. including precise quotations no matter how offensive. Add responses of counsellor and parents to those contacts. It is possible to have an extremely aggressive brat who will take the better part of your class, once, taking steps 2 through 6 within one period. Do not deviate from this sequence, no matter how inconvenient.

7. On the sixth and subsequent encounters continue repeating step 6, adding each administrative response.

Example A. Perhaps the fourth day of school

Student behavior	Your response	Note date on card and ...
Tardy (first time)	Reprimand	"Tardy"
Argues the point	Request private conference	"Insubordination"
Uses vulgar lagnuage	Plan to call home	"Rudeness and vulgarity"
Moves in your direction	Send to counsellor	"Menacing the teacher"
Pushes past you	Send to administration	"Assaulting the teacher"

If sending a student directly to the counsellor or office from class, the referral form is the hall permit. Use the intercom or a messenger to be sure the offender went where you said to go. Report a class cut if not.

Don't send a student from your room unless he persists in insubordination or becomes verbally or physically aggressive.

Example B: Perhaps the fifth week of school

Student behavior	Your response	Note on card
Talking out of turn	Reprimand	(You see already noted): Date - talking-reprimand Date - talking-conference Date-talking-called home Date - talking -counsellor
student subsides	Add note to card	Date-talking-

Do no more until you have a moment to write a referral to the administration, being sure to list everything on the card plus the words "chronic disruption." Drop the referral off at the office later. Add "administration" to the card.

Appendix C: Classroom Routine

1. We will be on time for the start of class.

2. We will have a few minutes of Independent Silent Reading in anything you like at the start of each period.

3. We will use a loose-leaf notebook with all papers written in ink. It will be evaluated each marking period.

4. We will have a Thought for Today on the board each day which will be copied into your notebook. You will write a paragraph or two explaining what it means to you.

5. We will take attendance at the start of each period. No questions will be answered nor will any hall permits be written until roll-taking is complete.

6. We will have carefully planned lessons with a great deal to accomplish each day. Work assigned must be completed on time.

7. We will leave the room at the end of the period quietly, not before being dismissed by the teacher. Some days we will run past the bell, some days we will finish early. In either case you will not leave until dismissed.

Appendix D: Discipline Reminders

1. Make no first day speech except, "You are in M_____'s class and you will act like ladies and gentlemen at all times." Read the Classroom Routine (Appendix C) to them. If a principal requires handouts and posted rules, use Appendix A.

2. Do not yell at or bawl out class, only individuals. You cannot afford to ignore, sympathize with, or understand any objectionable behavior, no matter how minor. If you do, if it is at all successful, it will only increase in both frequency and intensity. "Reflect" behavior.

3. Insist that students look at you when you are talking to them as a group or as individuals—no paperwork during discussions, no working on assignments other than the current one.

4. Allow no talking, no gum, no hats, no sunglasses, no coats, no leaving seats, no body contact—do not say this, **DO IT.** Be especially quick to correct any type of back-talk or slow compliance immediately. Do not generalize, stay with the specific offense and individual. Make no threats. Call no names.

5. Come down hard on calling out, unrelated questions, not bringing books.

6. Do not tolerate rudeness in any form to yourself or any student—be severe.

7. Reprimand any infraction immediately and **follow your Action Plan**—no second chances.

8. Keep desk and closet locked at all times.

9. It is more true for teachers than anyone else: "Silence means assent." Never let an objectionable action or remark go by unnoticed.

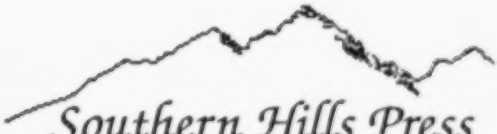
10. Show them that you love them by not letting them get away with anything.

Appendix E: Punishment Paragraph

Concentration

The most important part of becoming a better student is concentration. Working hard is important; being smart helps; but concentration is what will make me successful in the long run. Every time I fail to concentrate enough, I will make mistakes. Every time I seek eye contact with another student, I lose my place mentally. Every time I make a remark designed to get someone's attention, or hurt someone's feelings, or make someone laugh, I have ruined my concentration as well as the other person's. Every time I respond to someone who is trying to distract me, I must retrace the last several seconds of thought to find my place again. Every time someone, be it myself or another, succeeds in breaking the concentration of anyone in the class, learning stops and disruption occurs. Every time I play with something, put my head down, adjust my clothing, or think about something else while doing my work, I am weakening my ability to concentrate. If I only "do the work" then I will not remember the skills and will spend my life going over the same things time and time again. I owe it to myself to learn how to learn NOW; there is not much time left.

If this is not your copy...
please return this book to its owner
and order one for yourself from:



Southern Hills Press

Box 209 • Dayton, OH 45409

Please send _____ copies of
Classroom Discipline ($6.95 each) to

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City State ZIP code

Please add $1.50 for handling and mailing, check or money order only.
Ohio residents add 5 1/2 % sales tax.

Total enclosed: $ _____

68/69

The first public school in America (the Boston Latin School) opened February 13, 1635. Classroom discipline has been a concern of teachers ever since. Now, over 250 years later, a good teacher has set out plainly how to deal effectively with disruptive students while maintaining the learning process.

Billie Taylor is an educator with over fifteen years teaching experience in urban junior and senior high schools. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wilmington College and a Master of Arts from The Ohio State University. Teaching English and remedial reading led him to examine the disciplinary process as the most effective way of assuring his students the opportunity to succeed. This book is his can't-fail system of classroom control.

DO YOU KNOW?

Why classroom rules aren't enough? *See "Rules"*
What two remarks from students, made long before a crisis has arisen, are certain signals that a behavior is intended to be disruptive? *See "Control"*
What you should have written down before a child is sent to an administrator? *See "Documentation"*

HERE IS WHAT YOUR COLLEAGUES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT *CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE:*

"Great! Great! Great! Great! Great!"
"Very strong!"
"The Action List is complete and should be very effective in eliminating problems"
"Good stuff!"
"Tremendously useful."
"Sort of a *One-Minute Manager* for teachers."

ISBN 0-944250-00-9